

REMARKS

This paper is in response to the Office Action of April 13, 2004. The due date for response extends to July 13, 2004.

Claims 1, and 3-18 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Benson (US 6,567,879). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Firstly, the Examiner asserts that Benson discloses an expander device for isolating segments from one another. Applicant respectfully traverses this assertion. In fact, Benson provides for reset of SCSI buses for power failure and hot swapping of devices on SCSI network (Column 2, lines 20-22). According to Benson, the bus controller includes reset circuitry for generating a SCSI bus reset signal. The SCSI bus reset signal being used to reset the first SCSI bus when the bus controller is in the first bus controller slot and the first SCSI bus is isolated from the second SCSI bus. Similarly, the second SCSI bus is reset when the bus controller is in the second bus controller slot and the first SCSI bus is isolated from the second SCSI bus (Table 1, claim 1 and summary of the invention). As can be seen, for the Benson invention to work, the respective controllers need to be in a specified slot. In both of the scenarios described above, the bus configuration is in split bus mode. In split bus mode, both SE to SE isolator 26 and SE to SE isolator 46 are disabled (Column 3, lines 29-31).

In contrast, in the claimed invention, the disabling of the output of the communication signals, isolates the first and second bus segments from one another. In the isolation mode the communication signals received on either bus segment are allowed but not transmitted to the other bus segment. Thus, in isolation mode, both buses can operate independently from one another. As taught by Benson in Column 3, as noted by the Examiner, "*...in the preferred embodiment, in full bus mode SE to SE isolator 26 provides connection (bridging) between even SCSI bus 19 and odd SCSI bus 39 and isolator 46 is disabled. In split bus mode both SE to SE isolator 26 and SE to SE isolator 46 are disabled.*" Thus, Benson teaches that in full mode, one of the isolators will be turned off in favor of the other bus, so that the other bus has full access to both buses. This operation is similar to the operation of the prior art described in the background of the Applicants invention. That is, if one side wants to access the bus, then the other bus will be inactive or disabled for other initiators. But, as now claimed, in isolation mode, communication is allowed in either bus segment.

Furthermore, in the claimed invention the SCSI expander controller includes a segment controller. The segment controller is adapted to generate a first signal, and the segment controller provides the first signal to the first and second SCSI I/O interface circuits to disable output of the communication signals from the first and second SCSI I/O interface

circuits to the first and second SCSI bus segments. The first signal is generated in response to an isolation command received from one of the SCSI bus segments. The disabling of the output of the communication signals isolates the first and second SCSI bus segment from one another.

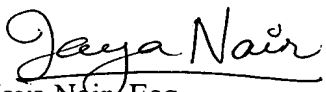
In addition, the hosts in Benson are connected to the SCSI bus through the bus controllers. Whereas, in the claimed invention, the host is connected to a corresponding SCSI bus segment directly and connected to SCSI bus segment of other hosts through the expander. The expander goes into isolation mode when the expander receives a first signal that is generated in response to an isolation command received from the one of the SCSI bus segments. In the claimed in invention, the expander couples a pair of bus segment and repeats communication signals received from one bus segment to the other bus segment. In contrast, the bus controller in Benson is incapable of functioning as an expander as the bus controller is unable to send communication signals from one bus segment to the next bus segment through the bus controller.

For at least the reason noted herein, it is submitted that Benson fails to teach each element of the claimed invention, the Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, and 11 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e). Further, dependent claims 3-10 and 12-18, each of which directly or indirectly depends from claims 1 and 11 are submitted to be patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) over Benson for the reasons set forth above. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) rejection.

A Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any questions concerning the present amendment, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at (408) 749-6900 Ext 6926. If any other fees are due in connection with filing this amendment, the Commissioner is also authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Order No. ADAPP190). A duplicate copy of the transmittal is enclosed for this purpose.

Respectfully submitted,
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